

APPENDIX

Legislative Apportionment Testimony  
Stacey Abenstein  
Field Director, NJ11th for Change  
February 2, 2022

My name is Stacey Abenstein, a 30-year resident of Livingston and the Field Director for NJ 11th for Change, an unaffiliated grassroots group dedicated to advocating for all people of New Jersey's 11th Congressional District through outreach and education. As our focus is Morris and Essex Counties, I have spent many hours analyzing the municipalities in these counties and would like to share my conclusions and map with you.

There are two growing communities in Morris County that deserve a strong voice and representation: Latinx and AAPI. You have heard from these groups in previous sessions, but I'd like to stress the importance of grouping together towns with common interests. After starting with core towns that represent these groups, rearranging a bit and using other surrounding towns to balance the districts, I drew a map with two competitive districts with strong minority or "global majority" representation. In LD26, the voting age population (VAP) would be more than a third global majority and more than 20% Latinx. In LD25, VAP would be almost a third global majority and nearly 18% AAPI.

Moving east to Essex County, my map includes a West Essex district, LD27, heavily populated by our historically Jewish communities. As I am not sure you have access to demographic information on religion, I am including a map from a study recently done by The Jewish Federation of Metrowest in conjunction with Brandeis University showing the dense population of Jews in West Essex. While the high concentration of Jews started in Eastern Essex, the community moved to the suburbs in the 1960's. In fact, I belong to Temple B'nai Abraham, a congregation that started in Newark in 1853, and thrived there through the

1960's, relocating to Livingston in 1973 after the migration of Jews to the suburbs. With antisemitism and hate crimes on the rise in NJ, it is important this group has strong influence in one district with representatives who can advocate for the needs of this large community.

My version of the diverse LD34 eliminates Clifton but maintains the 37% global majority currently present in a compact, Northeast Essex only district. The new LD29 creates a majority Latinx district, which is not the case now, with the help of Belleville and the West Hudson County towns of Kearney, Harrison, and East Newark. My version of LD28 would continue to be majority Black and representation should reflect that majority.

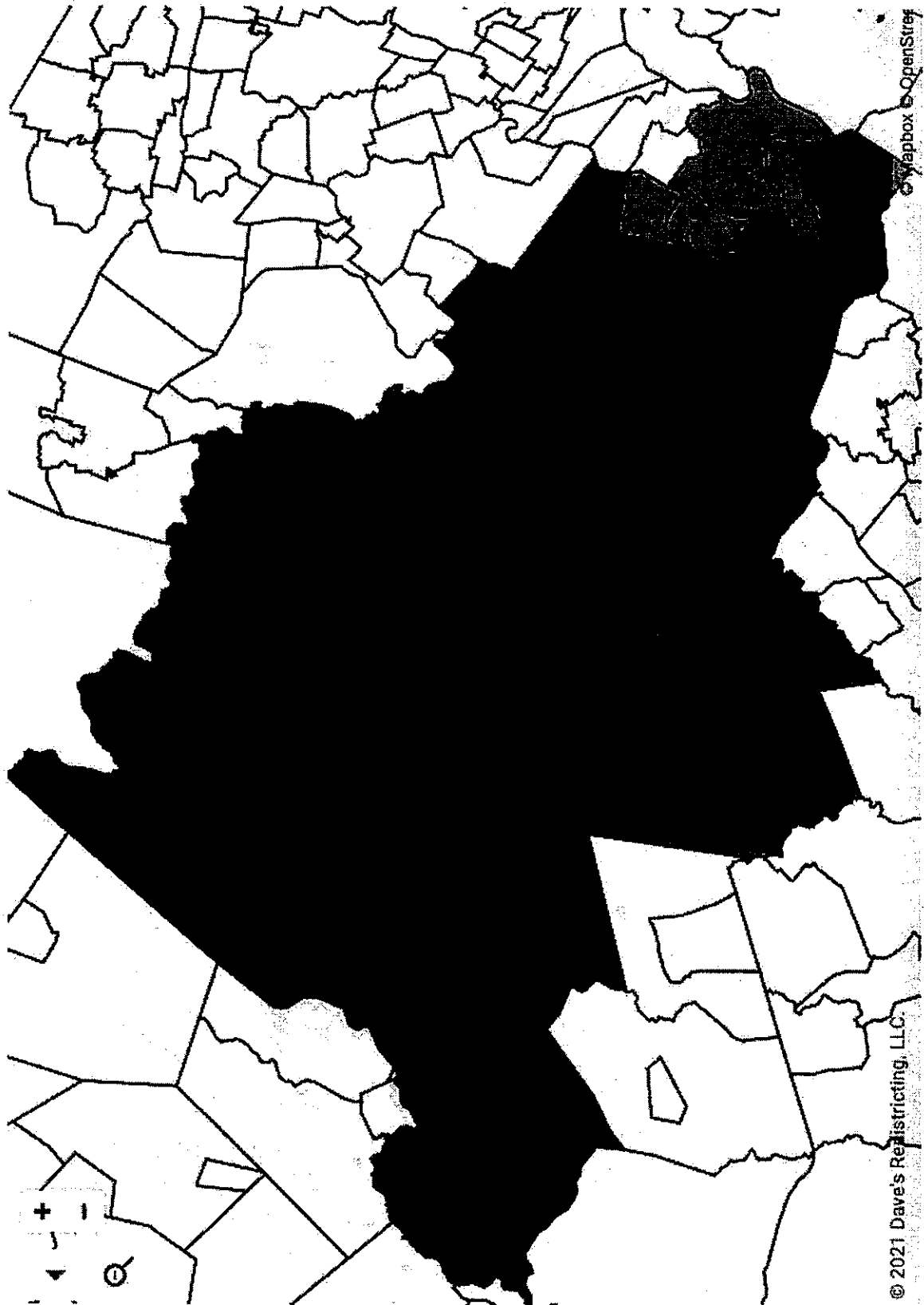
In conclusion, I respectfully request that you consider the new map I submitted. The Morris County districts are competitive and give a much needed voice to growing communities of interest. In Essex County, LD27 becomes a predominantly West Essex district, LD34 includes all Northeast Essex besides Belleville, which helps to create a new majority Latinx district in LD29. LD28 continues to be a majority Black district. The new districts are all well within the accepted deviation, compact, use county lines as a guide, and are competitive wherever possible. Additionally, 15/18 incumbents are written into their current districts. I received support for this map from Wind of the Spirit, an immigrant advocacy group based in Morristown.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I have submitted this testimony, the Jewish Federation map, and the new legislative map and analysis for your consideration.

\*Here is a link to the map on Dave's Redistricting:

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/1cea81d4-4b38-4475-9645-f2e8006da783>.

*DX*



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**Current Essex/Morris Legislative Map**

ID	Total Pop	Deviation	Dem	Rep	Oth	Total VAP	White	Global Majority	Hispanic	Black	Asian	Native	Pacific
25	221158	-4.70%	49.36%	48.49%	2.15%	174207	67.45%	32.55%	19.86%	4.65%	7.22%	1.46%	0.08%
26	224643	-3.20%	45.73%	52.12%	2.15%	179363	71.46%	28.54%	9.04%	3.06%	15.38%	0.91%	0.10%
27	233842	0.76%		34.24%	1.66%	180070	62.36%	37.64%	9.19%	14.49%	13.29%	0.78%	0.12%
28	254024	9.46%		17.71%	1.70%	191494	20.86%	79.14%	18.75%	56.47%	5.09%	1.47%	0.17%
29	247047	6.45%		15.89%	1.69%	192742	14.86%	85.14%	43.49%	35.85%	3.94%	1.79%	0.22%
34	235908	1.65%		18.10%	1.89%	182601	28.64%	71.36%	23.77%	42.81%	5.97%	1.64%	0.16%

**Suggested Essex/Morris Legislative Map**

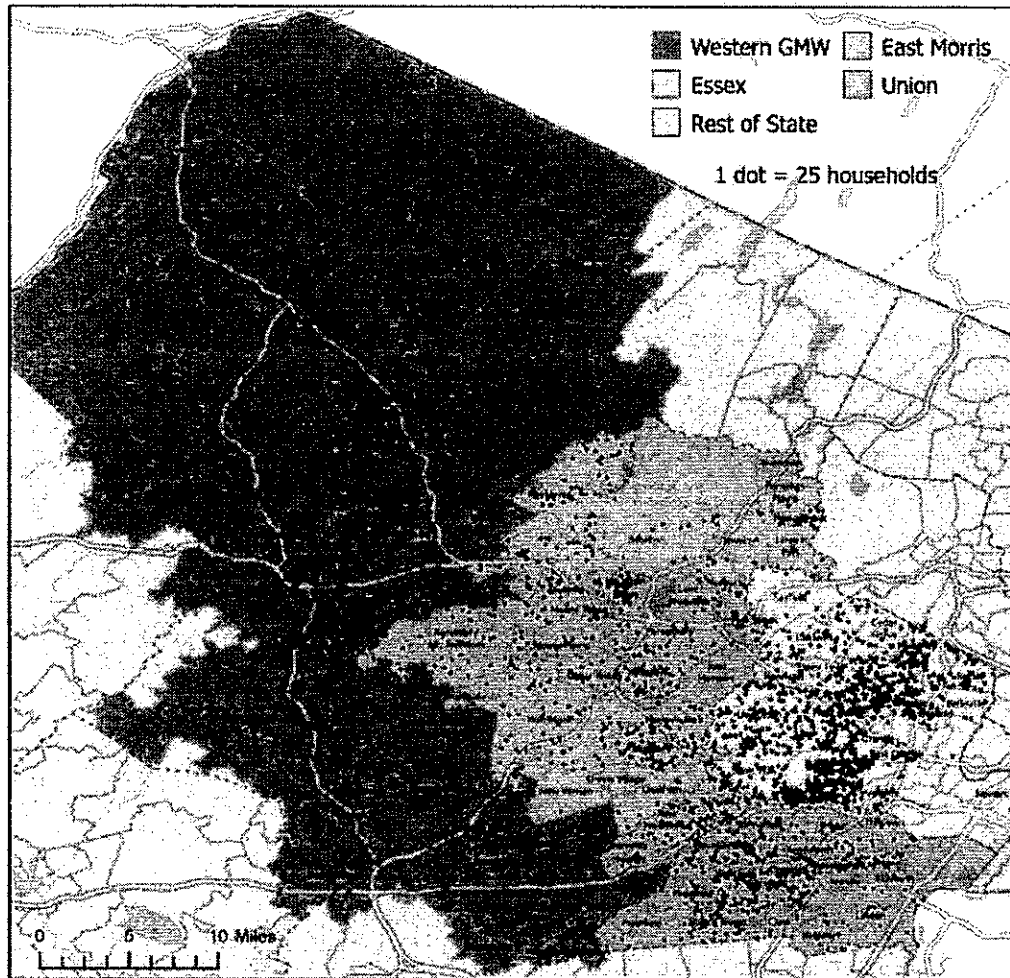
ID	Total Pop	Deviation	Dem	Rep	Oth	Total VAP	White	Global Majority	Hispanic	Black	Asian	Native	Pacific
25	230,001	-0.89%	47.21%	50.84%	1.95%	182,578	69.91%	30.09%	8.22%	3.20%	17.71%	0.69%	0.09%
26	232,254	0.08%	49.27%	48.54%	2.19%	184,633	66.02%	33.98%	20.56%	5.37%	7.98%	1.46%	0.10%
27	230,174	-0.82%		32.65%	1.73%	177,580	62.66%	37.34%	9.96%	14.83%	11.99%	0.82%	0.13%
28	236,913	2.08%		3.42%	1.18%	180,373	4.90%		15.56%		2.27%	1.31%	0.16%
29	237,117	2.17%		24.71%	2.12%	183,260	21.66%		53.42%	14.83%	6.71%	2.14%	0.25%
34	236,647	1.97%		17.68%	1.81%	183,309	31.14%	68.86%	17.74%	45.96%	5.89%	1.50%	0.17%

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## Incumbents

Elected Official	Party	Body	District	Town or Ward of Residence	Resides in New District
<b>Bucco, Anthony</b>	Republican	Senate	District 25	Boonton Twp	Yes
<b>Bergen, Brian</b>	Republican	Assembly	District 25	Denville	Yes
<b>Dunn, Aura</b>	Republican	Assembly	District 25	Mendham Boro	No
<b>Pennacchio, Joseph</b>	Republican	Senate	District 26	Rockaway Twp	Yes
<b>Barranco, Christian</b>	Republican	Assembly	District 26	Jefferson	Yes
<b>Webber, Jay</b>	Republican	Assembly	District 26	Morris Plains	Yes
<b>Codey, Richard</b>	Democrat	Senate	District 27	Roseland	Yes
<b>Jasey, Mila</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 27	South Orange	Yes
<b>McKeon, John</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 27	West Orange	Yes
<b>Rice, Ronald</b>	Democrat	Senate	District 28	Newark W32	Yes
<b>Caputo, Ralph</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 28	Nutley	No
<b>Tucker, Cleopatra</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 28	Newark S46	Yes
<b>Ruiz, Teresa</b>	Democrat	Senate	District 29	Newark N19	Yes
<b>Pintor Marin, Eliana</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 29	Newark E9	Yes
<b>Speight, Shanique</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 29	Newark C23	No
<b>Gill, Nia</b>	Democrat	Senate	District 34	Montclair	Yes
<b>Giblin, Thomas</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 34	Montclair	Yes
<b>Timberlake, Britnee</b>	Democrat	Assembly	District 34	East Orange	Yes

Figure 1. Map of the Greater MetroWest Jewish community



- Each red dot represents 25 Jewish families.

6x

## **Awni Abuhadba**

\* Good afternoon, Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, my name is Awni Abuhadba.

I am the former Deputy Mayor of Paterson. My family has deep roots in New Jersey. For over 40 years we've been able to be a part of the development of Passaic County calling Paterson and Clifton home.

\* The diverse Arab/MENA populations may trace their ancestry to different countries, speak different dialects or languages, practice different religions and fall into a broad range of socioeconomic categories. However, we have much more in common and wanted to be represented by leaders that understand our community ethnic diversity and unique needs.

\* We can trace our economic contributions to New Jersey by Syrian immigrants that established silk manufacturing soon after the city of Paterson was founded in 1792 and by 1924 there were 25 Arab American owned factories in Paterson and Hoboken. <<https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2019-09-25/immigrants-arereviving-south-Paterson-n-j-from-its-difficult-past>>

\* There are an estimated 113 "Islamic nonprofits organizations in New Jersey <[https://www.causeiq.com/directory/islamic-organizations-list/new-jersey-state/#search\\_section](https://www.causeiq.com/directory/islamic-organizations-list/new-jersey-state/#search_section)> and many Arab organizations throughout NJ. They have become a home and a safe haven for thousands of people seeking assistance and connection with their community. But we are also limited in our ability to provide social services, as many funding streams are limited to data and government sources of information that do not track my community.

\* This community of interest shares a uniquely immigrant experience with specific community needs that can only be addressed by someone that understands the complexity of my community.



\* Even though our community can trace its history to the establishment of the city of Paterson, we have seen a significant increase in our population over the last 30 years giving us the ability to gain leadership positions throughout local government but we currently have no representation in Trenton or Washington D.C.

\* PACC will submit a community of interest map highlighting 25 cities and townships in 6 counties with significant Arab American populations.

I hope you take these maps into consideration when drawing your district lines and are able to keep these cities together as a voting block.

Good Afternoon

Thank you, Chairperson Jones and Chairperson Barlas, Judge Carchman, and the members of the Legislative Reapportionment Commission for allowing me to testify.

My name is Bishop Paul Brown, and I am Senior Pastor of First Pentecostal Church in Neptune, NJ.

My church is located in the heart of the Midtown area, where Neptune meets Asbury Park. In fact, Oxonia Avenue is just a couple of blocks away from Ridge Avenue, where the town of Asbury Park begins.

I have been the pastor of First Pentecostal Church for over 30 years and a resident of Neptune for 37 years. I have been a Neptune Township Planning Board member for more than 15 years, and I currently serve as the chairperson.

Midtown is dear to my heart, and I have dedicated much time to community service in this area- serving the residents to the best of my ability.

Midtown has a concentration of people of color, as does the West Side of Asbury Park, where our two towns meet, and I ask you to keep that in mind when drawing the new legislative maps.

Midtown- specifically Springwood Ave/West Bangs was a thriving downtown where families lived, worked, and shopped, and famous people often frequented.

Upon the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, we saw what many towns experienced- riots and burning down of businesses and homes.

Asbury and Neptune are communities with a shared interest: investment in its people, particularly its' people of color.

I am so pleased to see that the Congressional Map has now reunited these two communities into the same district. We must be sure to keep these towns together to have representation that understands the importance of helping out the most vulnerable and investing in their well-being. I urge this Legislative Commission to keep Asbury Park and Neptune Township in the same Legislative District so those communities of interest can stay together. Thank you so much.

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## TESTIMONY OF AMALIA DUARTE - 2/2/22

Thank you Commissioners for allowing me to speak this afternoon as part of the public testimony.

You have an incredibly important job ahead of you, and I appreciate the time and focus you are dedicating to this work. I appreciate the news that you will be releasing maps in advance of finalization to maintain full transparency as part of this process.

I also want to thank Chairman Jones for appointing Laura Matos to this Commission because representation matters, and that is my theme today.

I am on the Mendham Township Committee – serving in my second term – and am the Chair of the Elected Officials Caucus of the Morris County Democratic Committee. I am also a founding member of the Latino Caucus of the Morris County Democratic Committee.

Morris County, and our state, are changing and becoming rapidly more diverse, as reflected in the new Census figures. One in five New Jersey residents is Latino or 21%, and in Morris County 14% of residents are Latino.

Communities such as Dover, Parsippany and Morris Plains have large new immigrant populations. Communities such as the Mendhams and Washington Township do not. We are more rural communities and more homogenous in our populations.

Currently, most of Morris County is split between LD-25 and LD-26. And the districts as currently drawn, divide some communities of interest.

For example, Mendham Township and Dover are in the same district, LD-25. Yet these communities are vastly different.

Mendham Township is 6% Latino; has 92% owner-occupied homes; 74% of residents have attained a BA or higher; and there is a median household income of \$196,000

Dover by contrast - 68% Latino; has 46% owner-occupied homes; 19% have a BA degree or higher; and the median household income is \$72,000.

Part of the goal in creating voting districts is to align communities of interest who have common concerns, problems and needs. The purpose is to ensure those needs are addressed by their elected officials and aren't ignored.

Prior to the 2020 Census, the Strategic Plan for Morris County developed by the County Commissioners in 2018, recognizes the need to address the growing diversity of Morris County and issues related to public transportation and housing affordability, for example. Many people who work in Morris County cannot afford to live here.

It is important to ensure that the voices of new immigrants, the Latino and Asian communities are heard and not overwhelmed by being part of a district that does not share their concerns.

My simple recommendation is to keep communities of interest together, moving Parsippany and Morris Plains into LD-25 and perhaps moving out towns, such as the Mendhams, Bernardsville, Chesters, or Washington Township, which are very different in their makeup.

I believe this would lead to a district that elevates the voices of residents in those towns and gives them greater influence and forces more accountability of our elected officials.

Thank you!

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 02, 2022 12:16 PM  
**To:** OLSaideAPPC  
**Subject:** Submission of Written Testimony

To the legislative apportionment committee

For communities that are disadvantaged in terms of resources, and political power. What does it mean to have equitable representation? My name is Kevin Escobar and I live in Morristown, New Jersey. I am a member of Wind of the Spirit.. We are a non-profit, faith based immigrant resource center in Morris County. But even simpler than that, we are a group of immigrants, and allies fighting for our community's interests. For over 20 years we have worked to leverage our power to influence local, state, and federal legislators. We've had many victories on the state level, including Driver's Licenses for All, Wage Theft Laws, Occupational Licenses, and more. We know what it is like when folks are able to come together and their political power works. Our community is culturally rich, vibrant, hardworking, and large. We sit in one of the wealthiest areas in the country. But there are two sides to Morris County that are important to understand for the purposes of political representation. Over the past decade, Gentrification has changed Morristown fundamentally from being a small town with a mix of many races and ethnicities, to being an exhaustively expensive place filled with luxury developments versus aging and decrepit apartment stock. The memories of the community members who used to live here, having since left to other towns such as Dover, Mount Olive, and Netcong where rents are more affordable by comparison. Rents over the past 3 years in Morristown have increased in some cases by 30%. We know because we've heard from our community, as well as done the research in town halls, and on the other side, communities of color have been displaced by real-estate speculators, inflating rental prices near transit hubs like Morristown and Dover.

We cannot wait to have the full weight of our representative to confront the issues impacting our communities. These issues threaten our place within communities we have lived in for years. The true disparity is in the numbers. Median income in Morris County is high. Wealth is concentrated in areas such as Morris Township, Mendham Township, Chester and Harding Township. Much of the population in this area own homes and property. Being grouped in with these towns results in low-income housing and general social investment in general being unsurprisingly absent from the political discourse of our representatives in Trenton.

We acknowledge this commission's recent addition as a positive step in a direction towards equity, but we need more. We're not asking for any head starts, or advantages of any kind. We don't need them. Our community is well-prepared, and educated to advocate for ourselves within the political system. What we need is a fair starting point. A starting point that recognizes every ounce of our humanity.. A representation that reflects our non-diluted political power in Morris County, a political force to be reckoned with in the fight for equity and justice for immigrant communities. We ask the commission to group Morristown, Morris Plains, Wharton, Mount Olive, Rockaway township and Parsippany together in the same legislative district.

Kevin Escobar *(they/he/him)*

Board Trustee

**Wind of the Spirit, Immigrant Resource Center**

*"education, organization, mobilization for social change"*

12x

GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE,

MY NAME IS SYLVIA GONZALEZ AND I AM A SUPERVISOR IN THE FAIRVIEW PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND HAVE BEEN PART OF ITS ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY FOR OVER 19 YEARS. FAIRVIEW IS LOCATED IN BERGEN COUNTY AND IS A SMALL BOROUGH THAT BORDERS HUDSON COUNTY. THIS TESTIMONY IS A PLEA FOR FAIRVIEW TO TRANSITION DISTRICTS THAT PARALLEL ITS GEOGRAPHY, AND VOTER DEMOGRAPHICS.

I HAVE DEEP ROOTED TIES TO THIS COMMUNITY. MY FAMILY HAS OWNED A BUSINESS ON ITS COMMERCIAL STRIP FOR OVER 39 YEARS AND WAS ONE OF THE FIRST LATINO OWNED ESTABLISHMENTS. I EVENTUALLY MOVED TO FAIRVIEW EIGHT YEARS AGO BECAUSE I FELT IT WOULD ENABLE ME TO BUILD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE FAMILIES FROM OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT AND CREATE AN OUTREACH OF RESOURCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY IN A LANGUAGE THAT MOST COULD UNDERSTAND.

TO HAVE FAIRVIEW TRANSITION DISTRICTS FROM DISTRICT 32, IN HUDSON COUNTY, TO DISTRICT 36, IN BERGEN COUNTY, **JUST MAKES SENSE.** OUR STUDENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE TIED TO CLIFFSIDE PARK. THEY BEGIN THEIR EDUCATION IN FAIRVIEW AND CULMINATE IT WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION IN CLIFFSIDE. FRIENDSHIPS ARE BUILT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES THAT LAST A LIFETIME.

OUR BUSINESS DISTRICT IS AN EXTENSION TO ONE ANOTHER GEOGRAPHICALLY-- TO THE POINT THAT YOU CAN NOT DISTINGUISH WHERE ONE TOWN BEGINS OR THE OTHER ENDS AND LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS OFTEN HELP ONE ANOTHER AS NEIGHBORS OFTEN DO. THE DEMOGRAPHICS IN POPULATION MIRROR ONE ANOTHER AS WELL. THERE IS A HIGH POPULATION OF MINORITIZED GROUPS THAT HAVE BUILT A NETWORK TO OFTEN LEAN ON ONE ANOTHER TO ASSIST IN AFTER SCHOOL CARE OR CHILD DROP OFF AND PICK UP. HENCE, IT SHOULD BE A BERGEN COUNTY DISTRICT SO THAT RESOURCES LIKE RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS CAN BE INTERCHANGEABLE AND BENEFIT ALL STUDENTS.

13x

FAIRVIEW IS NOT JUST A PLACE ON A MAP, IT IS A SMALL COMMUNITY I  
CALL HOME AND BECAUSE OF THAT, I WANT WHAT IS BEST FOR IT.  
TRANSITIONING TO DISTRICT 36 IS NOT ONLY LOGICAL BECAUSE OF THE  
AFOREMENTIONED, BUT IT WILL SOLIDIFY THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION  
THAT ALREADY EXISTS BETWEEN FAIRVIEW AND CLIFFSIDE PARK.

**Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all today.**

Redistricting Testimony – Toni D. Hendrix

Commissioners, all Elected and Appointed Officials Good Afternoon. My name is Toni Hendrix. I live in Somerset, Franklin township where I have been active in community and civic engagement for over 20 years.

It is my pleasure to address you today to share with you the story of my community “greater New Brunswick” area. My community is the home to many different groups of color. We have a strong Black American community, a growing African community, a very diverse Hispanic/LatinX community as well as Asian Americans of many different backgrounds - we are truly an extremely diverse community – representing many different cultures but united through common interests and a desire to have our voices matter.

New Brunswick serves as our anchor City, with a walkable downtown that boast many excellent restaurants and artistic options for all groups. The New Brunswick campuses of Rutgers University are major institutions in our district, with many students who are a part of our community. The Rutgers Piscataway campus provides housing for many of the students, and numerous community activities are routinely conducted in the Piscataway campus student union buildings, and of course the Rutgers sports venues. The New Brunswick area is also the home of two excellent healthcare facilities; Robert Wood Johnson Hospital and Saint Peters Hospital with many extended healthcare offices spread throughout Piscataway and Franklin Township. Hamilton Street and Easton Avenue are major arteries that extend from downtown New Brunswick through Franklin Township and serve as a connective corridor featuring many professional services and small businesses that serve the greater New Brunswick area.

The economy of the district is fueled by both white-collar business such as Johnson and Johnson headquarters, and Rutgers Cancer Institute as well as numerous financial and professional services businesses. The district also enjoys blue collar jobs with the recent addition of a significant number of large-scale warehouses such as Amazon and Federal Express.

Similar to areas such as Newark, Greater New Brunswick has an extremely robust arts and cultural commission, as well as performing arts spaces, which unites our diverse community in art. Binding it all together is the diversity of our houses of worship; so large and so diverse that Franklin Township has named a major street, Cedar Grove Lane, Interfaith Way.

In closing, extremely diverse communities are an excellent place to live and raise children. Our community needs representation that understands the challenges of continuing to provide economic programs to support all of our diverse groups, along with providing access to low-income housing, and a strategy to address homelessness. It's also vital to expand public transportation beyond the core of downtown New Brunswick, so that everyone can access jobs and vital services.

I thank the Committee for listening to me today and ask that you strongly consider keeping my community – New Brunswick, Piscataway and Franklin Township = together when drawing new maps

Again, thank you.



**TESTIMONY BY CLARIBEL CORTES**  
**LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022**

Thank you Judge Carchman, Chairman Jones, Chairman Barlas, and all of the members of the Legislative Apportionment Commission for allowing me to speak today. My name is Claribel Cortes, and I was recently elected to serve as Middlesex County Surrogate, I serve as the Vice-Chair of the NJ Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, but today I testify before you as a proud resident of North Brunswick, Middlesex County, and constituent in the 17th Legislative District. I appreciate the Commission's willingness to hear public testimony on what our legislative districts will look like for the next decade. This will determine how communities elect representatives who will not only fight for them to secure state resources but lay the foundation for communities to elect representatives that truly reflect the changing demographics of New Jersey for decades to come.

As I mentioned before, I am the current Surrogate of Middlesex County. Not only am I the first female Surrogate to represent Middlesex County, but I am also the first Latino to serve as a Constitutional Officer in the county. This is not only a personal point of pride, but a reflection of the diversity Middlesex County has embraced. Middlesex County is now almost 62% non-white, and our countywide elected leadership reflects that. Middlesex County also includes four of the 25 most diverse towns in the state based on the 2020 Census.

For the first time, all three constitutional offices are held by women, led by Sheriff Mildred Scott - the first African American Sheriff elected in the state of New Jersey, and the elected leaders on the Middlesex County Board of County Commissioners are majority female and reflect each of the growing minority groups throughout the county.

This is a powerful message and narrative to take with you as you consider redrawing the legislative boundaries for the districts within and that touch

Hex

Middlesex County. There were many positive pathways for greater representation for Middlesex County voters that were created over the course of the last decade in the currently enacted map – female representation grew from two (2) to five (5) women in the legislature, and there are now four (4) minority legislators representing Middlesex County. There is an opportunity for even more growth in representation if the legislative configurations stay relatively the same.

The 19th Legislative District, home to Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez - one of ten Latino legislators in the state, currently includes Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, and Carteret. The 19th legislative district is a majority-minority district and 37% Latino. The growing voice of the Latino community since the last map was enacted allowed the opportunity for Assemblywoman Lopez to be elected in 2017. The diverse Latino communities in Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, and Carteret rely on representation in Trenton, and splitting these communities would do irreparable damage to the almost 90,000 Latinos currently living in the core of the current district.

The 18th legislative district, home to Assemblyman Sterley Stanley - the first South Asian legislator from Middlesex County, currently includes Edison and East Brunswick. One may argue to combine the Oak Tree Road corridor between Woodbridge and Edison, but doing this would drastically dilute the Latino community in the 19th legislative district and would cut the South Asian and Indian community in half for the first Indian legislator out of Middlesex County. The 18th legislative is currently almost 37% Asian.

The 16th legislative district, home to newly elected Assemblywoman Sadaf [SAA-DOFF] Jaffer[JA-FUR] - the first Muslim mayor to be elected in the United States and one of six South Asian legislators elected last year, includes South Brunswick which is 49% Asian. Its inclusion in the 16th legislative district increased the district's growing minority population created the opportunity for Sadaf [SAA-DOFF] Jaffer[JA-FUR] to be elected to the assembly. South Brunswick also plays a major role in hosting large cultural and religious gatherings where residents from Montgomery and Princeton gather to celebrate Diwali [D-WALL-E]

hosted in South Brunswick each year, and South Brunswick is home to the Islamic Center of Central Jersey - the large mosque and cultural center that has been serving the community for almost 40 years and is expanding to include a sports facility and multi-family senior housing. I urge you to keep South Brunswick in the 16th legislative district to strengthen the South Asian community's voice in the electoral process.

And in my hometown, currently in the 17th legislative district and named as one of the 25 most diverse towns in NJ, the 2020 Census revealed that North Brunswick is 26% Asian and almost 25% Latino. The Latino community in North Brunswick relies on the shopping and community programs available in New Brunswick. There is also a new train station being built in town that will connect North Brunswick to the downtown hub and hospital system in New Brunswick.

There will be other Middlesex community members who will join hearings over the next week to advocate to keep current communities of interest together and ensure a path for greater representation for years to come. I thank you for your time and your consideration, and I wish you luck on the apportionment process.

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**From:** :  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 02, 2022 12:12 PM  
**To:** OLSaideAPPC  
**Subject:** From Web Form My written comments for the apportionment hearing

marc kline

Long Branch, New Jersey 07740  
Monmouth Reform Temple

Thank you Judge Carchman, Chairman Jones, Chairman Barlas, and all of the members of the Legislative Reapportionment Commission for allowing me to come before you to weigh in and share my thoughts and concerns over the matter of legislative redistricting. I am a resident of Long Branch. I serve as Rabbi of Monmouth Reform Temple in Tinton Falls. Over the course of my 8 years in the area, I have helped create the Chaplaincy program for the Red Bank Police Department, serve as volunteer Rabbinic Chaplain for the four area Hackensack Meridian Hospitals (Bay Shore, Riverview, Jersey Shore, and Ocean), and am working with the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office in co-creating their Chaplaincy program. Walking/working in a diverse world of religious traditions and as the Interfaith Chair for the Jewish Federation the Heart of New Jersey, I have loved the opportunity to see how important our shared relationships with our state officials plays out in ensuring that our communal efforts and our government voices are mutually supportive.

I share these credentials only to demonstrate that I am blessed to interact in the wider faith community that spans the 11th District. The relationships we forge allow us to share in our celebrations and concerns for the needs of the wider community. In large part, the reality that we have the ears and energy of the same state legislators has helped us galvanize program resources and support. It is because we are in "a" conversation with the state government that we have been able to both influence our Senator and Assembly People and communally affirm or respond to their interests, directions, and ideas. The diversity of religious traditions already rooted in common relationship and interest is of consequence in ensuring vibrant and healthy community dynamics. Because of our shared relationships in this District, we have been able to count on generations of elected officials participating in our work across the denominational lines, legitimizing our shared values and shared destinies. We lose this affirmation if the Districts are redrawn and we end up separated from each other.

I cannot ignore the impact that the shared voices of faith and government play out in creating programming for the community beyond the "faith" world. Our concerted efforts combatting hunger, homelessness, and lack of medical care; providing assistance enhancing education and social services in schools and agencies serving otherwise marginalized people; and promoting a return to the dignity and humanity guaranteed by our constitution and covenanted in our religious traditions. These efforts that stem from the shared experiences will fracture if we have to recreate our relationships de novo because someone(s) wanted a political "do over."

As a microcosm of everything I have shared, more specifically to the Jewish community, maintaining the geographic integrity of our district recognizes the inter-relationships the Jewish populations across the Red Bank, Long Branch, West Long Branch, Ocean Twp., Tinton Falls, Deal areas share with a legislative voice. As the "other" in the wider society, knowing that we can stand together adds to our security and more importantly, to the impact we can share in the communal conversation.

These communities are the centers of Jewish residence, commercial interaction, houses of worship and study, and places of employment. These communities also provide the hub that helps to connect the surrounding Jewish communities. Dividing this district would divide our ability to speak as a community with our legislative officials.

"On a personal level, I urge this delegation to keep the Jewish populations of Red Bank, Long Branch, West Long Branch, Ocean Twp, Tinton Falls and Deal together in the same legislative district. However we redraw / reapportion legislative representation, I encourage discernment that takes into account the impact such changes will have on the inter and intra communal relationships that we share in our communities and with a unified voice with our legislative representatives. Thank you so much."

## LAYLA ODEH

\* Good afternoon, my name is Layla Odeh. I live in Bergen county and I am here with The Palestinian American Community Center located in Clifton as the lead of our GOTV team. I am also a college student at Montclair State University. To begin, I would like to state that I endorse the map that Fair Districts New Jersey is presenting today.

Considering the growth New Jersey has experienced regarding our prominently diverse constituency, I think it is the closest at the moment to representing a racially equitable map. More specifically and in regards to my community, though we have a long journey ahead, I think this map is heading in the right direction of building political power for Arab Americans in NJ.

\* The U.S. Census counts people who hold Arab ancestry or other Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) origins within the "White" racial category. The Arab/MENA community, though lumped into the White racial category by the U.S.. Census, is quite distinct from White populations.

\* Being lumped into the White race category has real and detrimental effects on our community: health, socioeconomic relief, admission into schools, psychological effects, and impact on immigration issues.

\* The South Paterson Arab American community is a great example of our economic contributions to New Jersey as it is currently leading economic development for the entire city of Paterson.

\* An estimated 10,000 Arab American residents throughout New Jersey visit the South Paterson Arab business corridor nearly every weekend bringing in huge economic opportunities to our community.

\* Constituents within the Arab American community have created a sense of empowerment within themselves and for other community members through these businesses and religious spaces. It can only be

preserved if we are kept together and receive the representation needed to address policy change and unique community needs.

\* Please consider keeping my community together as a voting block to better serve our needs.

Thank you for accepting these written testimonies. Please find them below. We are also attaching a list of Arab American Politicians in NJ and a list of 100 Mosques that Arab Americans Frequent. Here is the latest version of our community map <<https://districtr.org/COI/106263>> . You can find a complete presentation attached to this email.

### **Rania Mustafa**

\* Good afternoon, thank you for the opportunity to testify again today. Thank you to the commission for giving the Fair District Committee the opportunity to present this map. My name is Rania Mustafa. I am here on behalf of my community and as the Executive Director of The Palestinian American Community Center (PACC for short). I am also here to endorse the Unity map that Fair Districts New Jersey just presented. I think it is the closest at the moment to representing a racially equitable map that captures the diversity that NJ embodies. Our NJ community originates from culturally, geographically, and religiously diverse backgrounds, embodying many experiences and narratives that cannot be distilled into a singular experience or partisan lines. More specifically, though we have a long journey ahead, I think this map is heading in the right direction of building political power for Arab Americans in NJ.

\* To give some context, I was born and raised in Paterson, the epicenter of Arabs in New Jersey and I have lived within the same one mile radius for most of my life. And in the last 8 years I have first hand seen the effect that PACC has had on our community. PACC has quickly become a staple in our community and a pillar in educating and providing critical services our community needs. We have worked with various Arab American community leaders throughout the state to map Arab American community pockets.

\* New Jersey is home to one of the most diverse Arab and Middle Eastern & North African (MENA) communities in the country. Specifically, New Jersey has the second largest community of Palestinians in the United States.

\* At least 3.5 million Arab American live in this country, yet we are not represented in Census data as unique racial and ethnic categories and we are still categorized under the white race.

\* The population who identified as Arabic-speaking in the U.S. Census grew more than 42% between 2000 and 2017. The number of New Jerseyans who claim an Arab ancestry has more than doubled since the Census first measured ethnic origins in 1980, and is among the fastest growing Arab populations in the country.



According to the census, the statewide Arab American population is 116,240 individuals; however, the Arab American Institute (AAI) estimates about 257,868 Arab Americans live in New Jersey. That is a gross undercount of our community's population.

\* And this is why, in addition to endorsing the fair district map, we have submitted our own community of interest map. Our community of Interest is diverse in geography and primarily lives in Passaic, Hudson, Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, and Monmouth Counties. We thank the commission for taking it into account in the map making process. In our map we point to the cities and important landmarks like Mosques, Churches, Business, Community Organizations, and Schools with high populations of Arab Americans.

\* It is important that our community of interest is recognized and is mapped together when possible so we may have the ability to elect candidates of our choice to address our specific community needs.

\* Thank you very much for your time and attention to this very important matter!

24x

**Thank you to Chairmen Jones and Barlas, to Judge Carchman, and to all the members of this commission for the opportunity to offer testimony. And a special welcome to newly named Commissioner Matos, I am delighted that you were appointed to this important role.**

**I am Mara Novak, co-Executive director (along with Leslie Bockol) of NJ 11th for Change. As a grassroots organization centered in Congressional District 11, we focus closely on the needs — and the demographics — of people living in our territory, including the formerly 10, now 8 LDs that make up our territory.**

**In addition to all the other factors I know you have to balance in the monumental task of redistricting, NJ 11th for Change urges you to create districts that take into account the changing demographics of our state's population. In our part of North Jersey we see significant growth particularly in the AAPI and Latino communities. We encourage you to consider these COI as you draw new districts to strengthen their voices.**

**There are significant and expanding AAPI populations in the CD 11 and CD 11 adjacent towns of Parsippany, Livingston, Millburn, Montville, Mountain Lakes, Boonton Township, as well as in Hanover and East Hanover. The Latino populations in Morristown, Dover, Morris Township, Wharton, Mine Hill, Rockaway Boro, Rockaway Township Roxbury, Mount Olive and Victory Gardens continue to grow rapidly as well.**

**New maps should be drawn to keep as many of these towns together as possible to give these communities of interest a larger voice.**

**At NJ 11th for Change, we prioritize government representation that is transparent, responsive, and accountable to all residents. The demographics of NJ are changing, and it is a disservice to our current voters if districts are drawn reflecting the demographics of the past, and that no longer accurately reflect the people who now live in them.**

**Thank you for the work you are doing here on this Commission.**

26x

## **Diab Mustafa**

- \* Good afternoon, my name is Diab Mustafa. I am the Palestinian American Community Center President of the Board of Directors.
- \* My family has roots in Passaic, and Hudson county and I recognized the needs of my Arab community in New Jersey which is why I co founded PACC.
- \* My work founding PACC gives me a unique experience in directly seeing how my community has grown over the last decade and how we expect to continue to grow in the coming decade.
- \* I want to ensure the commission recognizes my community as part of the redistricting process, as the process primarily uses Census demographic data, which categorizes Arab/MENA communities as White.
- \* Because we are not counted in the Census as our own racial or ethnic category we are invisible in government processes, cutting our ability to get funding, or our policy concerns addressed.
- \* Additionally, this inability to count our community as a unique ethnic/racial category limits the data available to demonstrate disparities and to address needs.
- \* For example, Language access needs are a big concern for my community. PACC specifically confronted language access needs in state government when we realized that voter registration forms were not available in Arabic, and we know this problem exists at every level of state government when the public seeks information or services.
- \* The Arab American community of New Jersey has created a community of interest map that encompasses counties and 25 cities with the highest concentration of population and businesses that contribute to the economic development of these cities in significant ways.

\* Passaic County is considered the epicenter of the Arab American Community in New Jersey, with Paterson being the highest concentrated city, Clifton, Woodland Park, Little Falls, Wayne, and Passaic.

\* Hudson County Arab American population is concentrated in Jersey City "The Heights Area" Union City, West New York, mainly centered around Bergenline.

\* Bergen County, Arab Americans live in Fairlawn, Paramus, Garfield, Elmwood Park, and Cliffside Park.

\* Essex County also has a high Arab American population, centered around Bloomfield and Nutley.

\* Middlesex County also has highly concentrated Arab populations in New Brunswick, Piscataway, South River, Old Bridge, Edison, and Sayreville.

\* Monmouth County cities of Holmdel and Middletown have the highest concentrations.

\* By focusing on these 6 counties and 25 cities with high populations, it would be a great starting point for our community to receive the representation it needs to elect community leaders that will address our specific policy and community needs.