

Public Testimony on the Establishment of Congressional Districts in New Jersey
at the Essex County Donald M. Payne Sr. School of Technology
498-544 West Market Street, Newark, NJ 07107

December 5, 2021

Submitted by:

The New Jersey Redistricting Cohort

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated

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New Jersey Redistricting Cohort – Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Greetings to the Chair, the Honorable John E. Wallace, Delegation Chairs, Janice Fuller and Doug Steinhardt, and members of the New Jersey Redistricting Commission. Thank you for providing this opportunity for public testimony. My name is Ma'isha Aziz, and I represent the New Jersey Chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and the New Jersey Redistricting Cohort. As a resident of Voorhees, I am here to testify regarding three (3) communities of interest in Northern New Jersey that we have mapped. Our communities of interest maps were created in collaboration with members of the respective communities during an interactive focus group.

Our research uncovered important population trends in New Jersey that need to be taken into consideration in redistricting efforts in the state. For instance, the Brookings Institution found that, "...for the first time, there was a decade-long loss in the number of white Americans who do not identify with other racial and ethnic groups. This means that all of the nation's 2010-to-2020 growth is attributable to people of color—those identifying as Latino or Hispanic, Black, Asian American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Native American, and as two or more races ^[1]. Together, these groups now comprise more than 40% of the U.S. population" (Frey, 2021).

Other census research indicates "that New Jersey is getting more and more diverse, with a number of counties ranking within the top 100 most diverse in the country. Middlesex County is the most diverse according to the newly released data, followed closely by Essex County, then Hudson, Union and Mercer Counties. In 2010, only one New Jersey county — Essex County — featured a population in which the largest racial or ethnic group was non-white. Essex County's largest group of people identify as Black, the same as in 2010, but the population of Hispanic and Latino people

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has surpassed white people in Passaic County in 2020, a new development. But even in counties with a majority of people who identify as white, there is a rise in diversity.

Though the largest racial and ethnic group in Bergen County remains white, the gap has shrunk significantly in the last decade. According to the census data, 53.6 percent of the population is white in 2020, as opposed to 62.5 percent in 2010” (Samuels, 2021).

Additionally, race and ethnicity data “...should be carefully considered when redrawing district boundaries so as not to dilute the voting power of racial and ethnic groups. As it stands, New Jersey’s state legislature is disproportionately white, with low representation from Asian and Latinx/Hispanic communities. New Jersey’s new districts should ensure that these groups end up with a proportional and fair voice when allocating political power” (Chen, 2021).

To this end, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., New Jersey Redistricting Cohort has reviewed the results of the 2020 Census and has determined that the significant increases in population in key regions in the State call for a redrawing of Congressional Districts consistent with the attached maps to ensure fair and equitable representation for the residents in those communities of interest. The communities of interest maps were drawn with the intent of district compactness, contiguity, preservation of communities of interest with the one-person-one-vote standard, and in compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

The northernmost community in our map (#1- colored purple) represents "Greater" Paterson. We suggest including Woodland Park (a town that was once considered West Paterson), Clifton, Fairlawn, Haledon (except North Haledon) and Fairlawn eastbound to Fairlawn Avenue, and Hawthorne north of Paterson to Diamond

Bridge Avenue. These communities share movie theaters, restaurants, parks, and medical facilities. Elmwood Park, to the east of Paterson and Clifton, also uses the same services and places of worship and the St. Joseph Hospital and Regional Center services. This map would be a plurality voting district and would allow the community to vote for candidates reflective of its concerns. As proposed, this map creates a majority/minority community.

The most eastern community that we have mapped (#2- colored green) is "Greater Newark" containing the entirety of Newark, East Orange, Irvington, Hillside, the southern section of Maplewood (bounded by Springfield Avenue), and a segment of Harrison (to the border of Central Avenue). Harrison is home to the famous Tops Diner, a vital gathering place for the Newark and Harrison communities. Newark is home to Symphony Hall and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, both of which are cornerstones of Newark and surrounding communities and the state of New Jersey. It is important to note that Springfield Avenue is a corridor containing a substantial portion of black-owned businesses supported by residents of Newark and Irvington. Many of these communities share houses of worship, libraries, and parks as well. This map, as redrawn, maintains the vitality of communities that share and use the same institutions and must remain intact to ensure that their voting power is not diluted. This map would represent a community that is 56.5% Black and 26.9% Latinx.

Our third community of interest (#3- colored lavender) represents the Black community of Montclair and the surrounding area. In this community of interest, we have included the southern regions of Montclair and Bloomfield as well as all of West Orange. To the districts in Montclair we propose adding Bloomfield and areas north to

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Claremont Avenue in the north to include Mountainside Hospital. Belleville to Perry Street, Division Avenue and Joralemon Street should be included in the newly drawn map. Although this community is spread across multiple municipalities, residents share many community institutions, such as shopping and community recreation centers. In considering the mapping of this area, please take into account that Belleville and Newark share the resources of Branchville Park and Clara Mass Medical Center. This acute care facility serves Essex, Bergen, Hudson, and Passaic counties.

Our proposed maps integrate the results of the 2020 Census with testimonials from neighborhood residents to create geographic boundaries that reflect the lived experiences and shared interests of the community. While it would have been helpful to have had the opportunity to review any maps proposed by the State Congressional Redistricting Commission as a guide, that has not been forthcoming. It has been suggested that Commission will not begin working on their maps until January 1, 2022, well after the date of the last scheduled public hearing.

The slow speed with which the Commission makes its maps, the short notice of public hearings, and the lack of commitment to release a proposed map BEFORE the final public hearings is concerning to our cohort. We therefore would urge that when the Commission releases its proposed maps, we are given an opportunity to review them and share our feedback. To the extent we believe that the map offered by the commission does not afford our communities fair and equitable representation, we will petition the appropriate authorities to request the scheduling of additional dates for public hearings.

We ask that the Commission commit to drafting a map that adheres to redistricting criteria, particularly related to the Voting Rights Act and the standard of one-

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person-one-vote. We are confident that this body will create a map that will not be racially discriminatory and will be reflective of communities of interest. As a non-partisan organization, we fully expect the redistricting process to be politically fair and accurately reflect the state without a bias towards either political party.

Respectfully Submitted,

Members of the New Jersey Redistricting Cohort
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated

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Roy Mandelbaum

Westfield, New Jersey 07090

Good morning and thank you commission members, and especially the Honorable Justice Wallace for this opportunity to voice my opinion here today.

My name is Roy Mandelbaum and I live in CD7, Westfield.

You are tasked with a difficult job that will impact New Jerseyites in innumerable ways for another ten years.

I hope that each of you will use your common patriotism and BELIEF in fair play to agree upon new district maps that will remain fair and will let the best man or woman win to represent the needs of their constituents.

I'm a retired Medicare recipient living in Westfield and CD7 for greater than 25 years.

While working in Manhattan I relied on my daily trek of the Raritan Valley train line, into Newark and then up the station stairs to the Path train, and then on to the World Trade Center.

Of the 19 towns along the Raritan Valley Line, 13 and 1/2, that's a part of Union, are in CD7.

The others are split between CD's 9, 10, and 12.

The Raritan Valley Line is often called the forgotten line but we would be less forgotten if we were able to unify our voices.

It would make sense for some of these towns to move into the CD7 so that our concerns are not diluted.

So, as mentioned I'm retired and,
now I have a short commute,
I substitute teach in the Westfield School District.

I'm not a political guru and
I don't have lots of data points or percentages to share.

But, around 2016 it became apparent to me that I had to become a bit more politically active in order to have my voice heard by my Congressman.

Pretty soon I realized that I lived in a so-called safe district - a safe district that was created by a redistricting map, like the ones you are entrusted to make.

That gerrymandering resulted in voter complacency in Congressional elections because, I believe, voters felt that their vote didn't even matter - the old was destined to become the new with that skewed sort of district map.

Back then, CD7 was drawn to be a safe map for the incumbent, and that was supposed to be just that - a safe map.

But the voters spoke in 2018 and flipped the seat.

All we ask now is that you draw this map fairly.

I along with many other Americans still have faith in the fairness of our political systems.

Please don't shred that belief

and

please do find that common patriotism and that idea of fair play within yourselves that I am sure is what drew you into politics to begin with.

Thank you for your kind attention.

My name is Andrew Smythe, and I am a constituent of NJ-11. I am here to speak out against the redistricting attempts to transfer areas of Montclair from NJ-10 into NJ-11. The constituents of Montclair in NJ-10 should not be dismissed or be utilized for political gain.

Representation in the United States of America means something. NJ-10 is the only majority Black US district in New Jersey and as a result the representation of NJ-10 is determined by a majority black voting block.

If the South End and 4th Ward of Montclair were to transfer from NJ-10 to NJ-11, black constituents from these areas would lose their voting influence. As a tiny minority of voters in NJ-11, a majority white district, Black voters would see their interests ignored and overwhelmed.

This is atrocious because as I said, representation in the United States of America means something. Representation is more than just being elected by a district or a state. Representation is fighting for the interests of your district and having the lived experience to understand what your constituents need.

Compared to our majority caucasian voting demographic as a country, black american citizens disproportionally are less likely to have health insurance, have more student loan debt, and are more targeted by a broken criminal justice system. A majority black district that has lived through these systemic inequities has the ability to elect a representative who understands the inequities that they lived through. Losing that power is a detriment to the values of democracy.

As a constituent of NJ-11 and an individual involved in political discourse and activism, I know this district at a statistical level and a personal level. This is a battleground district between Democrats and Republicans. It is also a voting base that does not live through the same economic and racial inequity that many constituents in NJ-10 live through. Our representative, Mikie Sherrill, is a blue dog democrat who pushes for many policies that republican congresspeople and their donors would support. This is influenced not only by the makeup of the battleground district, but it is also a reflection of how her lived experience is not the same as NJ-10.

For the purposes of maintaining our values of a representative democracy, we must allow Black constituents of NJ-10 to maintain the power they have as participants in a representative democracy. Transferring them into a different district not only deters their voting power as a district, but it will disenfranchise constituents who are losing their power as a majority block. We must be cautious and empathetic to the needs of constituents in this country and guarantee that they can elect the necessary representation they deserve.

Written Testimony of Devon Jiang
New Jersey Redistricting Commission
Hearing on the Establishment of New Congressional Districts in New Jersey
Sunday, December 5, 2021
12:00 P.M.

Good afternoon chair and members of the commission; my name is Devon Jiang. I would like to note that, throughout these hearings, few individuals have come to speak from the 12th Congressional district, so I decided to testify again as a constituent from that district. There is a reason for this, though. The 12th district is rated as D+16, which means that in almost every single election, the same people win. That aspect is not to say that any of our representatives are bad, but instead, there is no reason for us to participate in elections if we know the outcome.

Meanwhile, in New Jersey's 5th District, voters feel as if their votes matter. In addition, their representative, Josh Gottheimer, heavily influenced legislation in the House. This example of leadership and accountability reverberates throughout the rest of this state, from Northern Jersey to Central Jersey to Southern Jersey. By the way, I know I'm in North Jersey territory, but Central Jersey is totally real, and I would like to just put that in the record. Another example is in the 2018 election, which saw Representative Andy Kim replace former Representative Tom MacArthur not because Mr. MacArthur was a Republican but rather because he rebelled against his constituents by attempting to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

This engagement by both the public and the representatives are only recognizable on a large scale because of competitive seats. Swing district members have an incentive to explain themselves and show proof that they represent their constituents. They are the solution to the lack of discussion and compromise in Washington. Currently, the increase in polarization means that representatives score more political points by spewing rhetoric than doing work. Even something as bipartisan as infrastructure took years to pass in Congress because of political shenanigans. Much of this stonewalling is because many representatives know they will win their reelections no matter what. Consequently, Congressional members from safe districts typically represent their caucus leadership rather than their people.

The people of New Jersey aren't the only individuals who want competitive districts. Even representatives who have campaigned in competitive environments advocate for it. I spoke with State Senator Kip Bateman about this issue, and he concurred that competition benefits everyone in New Jersey, including the public servants. He stressed that being a representative is about serving constituents, which in this present day is more likely to be done by representatives in contentious districts. Many New Jerseyans are frustrated at the stalling occurring in Congress, and much of these roadblocks are put up by highly partisan representatives looking to score

brownie points. Imagine if Mr. Steinhardt was a social media influencer whose sole life mission was to create political drama. If he were in a competitive district, he would never get elected, but that would be possible if he resided in an R+25 community. We can all agree that these tropes are not fit for Congress. However, we have those types of people in Congress who disrupt progress for the sake of political gain.

Look, I recognize that lobbyists exist to have the potential for a reactive gerrymander to become a reality in New Jersey. Competition, though, can benefit both parties that are on this commission. The 2021 election has shown how individuals in competitive boundaries get down to work. In Virginia, a competitive state, we saw how the Republican party replaced individuals who failed to represent Virginians. For the Democrats, I acknowledge that there are incentives for gerrymandering, but look at our current delegation. Josh Gottheimer led the push to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill; Andrew Zwicker focused on local matters. One member on this commission named Vin Gopal won reelection because he valued the views of his constituents over the thoughts of his bosses. Without individuals who have incentives to legislate, we could very well expect many safe Democrats to fall in the same void as Mr. Sweeney in 2021.

To the members of this distinguished commission, we must not subvert ourselves to the gerrymandered and uncompetitive maps of today's decade of redistricting. Most New Jerseyans want this commission to maintain competitive districts, and that is an opinion that should take importance in deliberations. After all, you are sitting on this commission because we, the people, endorsed a process influenced by public input. Therefore, let us elect representatives who act in the best interests of our populations. Let us have competitive districts that favor all parties in this commission. Let us feel like our votes matter. These goals aren't political kumbaya. It's real life, shown by some of our own New Jerseyans. Gerrymandering this state and following the status quo of making more partisan districts is easy, yet it will tarnish our delegation into nothing more like boring Indiana. So on behalf of the citizens of New Jersey and the 12th Congressional District, we implore you to make New Jersey's maps an imprimatur of competitiveness. Thank you, and I yield to the Honorable Chair Wallace.

Kerry Doyle

Montclair, NJ 07042

NJ Congressional Redistricting Testimony

Written: November 18, 2021

Thank you for considering my testimony. I am writing as a nearly lifelong resident of Essex County. I grew up in the south end of Bloomfield, and my parents still live there, and I am now raising a family in the south end of Montclair. Today, I am urging you to reunify the Essex County towns that have been split into two congressional districts. Montclair, Bloomfield, and West Orange are each clearly communities of interest, but the current district lines separate each of these towns in two. The district lines segment out the majority of the minority population of each of these towns and lump them into the urban 10th while the whiter neighborhoods are represented in the 11th. I can speak most personally to the impact this has in Montclair and Bloomfield.

Montclair is a diverse community which, decades ago, decided to implement a magnet bussing system to integrate its schools. This means that every parent has a stake in the success of every school regardless of geography. As a result of the choice to segregate the congressional districts, parents across town will often live in one congressional district and send their children to school in the other. This ignores the clear desire of the residents of Montclair to operate as a unified community.

Bloomfield is similarly divided. Many years ago, Bloomfield had two middle schools which divided the town's students geographically and also, as a result, divided the students into a largely white middle school and a middle school with more minority and low-income students. The township opted to unify its students into one diverse middle school decades ago, but the old segregated boundaries are seen in the current line dividing the 11th and 10th districts. Once again, families who have made the deliberate choice to live in a community that values and nurtures a diverse population find themselves divided along racial lines for the purposes of congressional representation.

The current boundaries of the 10th feels like the old tactic of "packing" minority communities into one district in order to weaken their political power, and, in fact, this is the result. Due to the non-competitive nature of the 10th district as compared to the 11th, the residents in the whiter neighborhoods of Montclair and Bloomfield are aggressively courted by candidates seeking to understand their needs while the residents of the more diverse south ends of each town are ignored by congressional campaigns who have no need to seek their votes. Moving the residents of Montclair's and Bloomfield's south ends into the 11th to rejoin their neighbors and fellow class parents from the other end of town would increase the political power of the minority groups currently packed into the 10th.

Please reunify my current home and my hometown! We deserve to speak as one voice in DC. In addition, I would like to urge the commissioners to release draft maps to the public well in advance of certification, and commit to holding additional hearings on the proposed maps to allow the public the opportunity to weigh in. Many people in Bloomfield and Montclair that I have spoken to are not even aware of this process.

Thank you very much for reading and considering my testimony.

I am Barbara Patrizzi, one of New Jersey's 2,410,952 unaffiliated voters.

Independents comprise 37% of the registered voters in New Jersey—almost as many as Democrats and 1.5 times more than Republicans. Many of us are millennials, African American, Latinx, Asian, and veterans. We are barred from voting in primaries as independents, although in many states, independents are granted this basic right. Imagine if democrats were required to register as republicans to vote, or vice versa. We registered unaffiliated because we strongly believe in non-partisan governance. Something our state and our country sorely need.

There is a single, token independent representative on the redistricting commission, while there are 6 representatives each for the two major parties. The redistricting process needs to reflect the composition of this state and be inclusive of non-partisan voices. Dividing the state neatly into 6 seats for the Democrats and 6 seats for the Republicans will once again create gerrymandered and packed districts that split communities and are non-competitive. Districts are not Democratic or Republican—they are citizen districts. Michigan created a redistricting process that is independent, citizen led, transparent, and fair. That's what New Jersey needs.

We will never be able to solve the problems that our state faces unless we get past the partisan divides that keep us from creating new solutions. That cannot happen without amplifying independent voices.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Barbara Patrizzi

Cherry Hill, NJ 08003

Dear Redistricting Committee members,

I would like to echo Mayor Ras Baraka's words spoken during his testimony to your committee today:

We expect that there will be no gerrymandering.

Like many others, prior to 2016 I was not aware of voter suppression strategies such as gerrymandering; in fact, I had never even heard the word "gerrymander." Much has changed since then -- from voter awareness to the composition of our communities. The eyes of aware and engaged voters like me are now upon you, and we demand fairness and transparency.

Today's meeting was the first I attended, but I know there were 7 public meetings previously. When will the Redistricting Committee present proposed redistricting map(s) for New Jerseyans to examine and weigh in on?

I listened with interest to the congressional district map proposed by a coalition of organizations including New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and a number of others. It seemed quite well-reasoned. When will we see the Committee's draft map?

I call for the Redistricting Committee to:

1. Produce congressional and legislative district maps that are drawn equitably and fairly; keep together communities with common cultures, concerns and issues; do not dilute the vote of majority-minority communities; and above all, do not favor one party or incumbent/candidate.
2. Publish proposed maps in a transparent manner that provides time for public review, public input, and adjustments accordingly. New Jersey voters are entitled to see the proposed maps, hear from the Committee rationale for any proposed changes, and have the opportunity to weigh in and have communities heard before any map is adopted.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Bridget Daley
Madison, NJ
CD-11

Good Afternoon,

My name is Mark Comesañas and I am a husband and father raising my children in the city of Newark, where I work, worship, and reside. I also currently serve as the Executive Director of My Brother's Keeper-Newark where I walk alongside young people, and specifically boys & young men of color, advocating for policies that impact them, their families, and our community. I'd like to first thank the commission for lending their time and dedication in hearing from the public over the course of the last several weeks and months.

My intentions are to be very brief and just highlight the need to ensure racial equity in drawing the congressional map for New Jersey. According to US News World Report and the 2020 census, New Jersey currently ranks as the 6th most diverse state in the country. It is this diversity that uniquely equips us to be a model for what equitable representation could look like across the country. It is for this reason that I stand with the New Jersey Institute of Social Justice, NAACP State Conference, Salvation and Social Justice, Fair Share Housing Center, and other groups advocating for the adoption of the Racial Equity Map.

This map serves to reverse the centering of one community over another, as was evident after the 2010 census and redistricting. It does so by:

1. recognizing the large and growing Latino population in New Jersey which is up 29% in the last 10 years;
2. acknowledging the growing Asian population in New Jersey which is up 30% in the last 10 years;
3. and respecting the nearly half of all New Jersey residents who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color.

In closing, I would also like to thank the commission for having scheduled only 9 of the 10 public hearings on this matter and having the foresight to not schedule the final meeting until the public is able to review and respond to the proposed redistricting map prior to its certification.

Kenneth F. Cerullo, Esq.

Mahwah, NJ 07430

December 5, 2021

Dear Members of the New Jersey Redistricting and Apportionment Commissions:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address the commissions with this written testimony. I am a concerned citizen interested in government reform in the hope of creating a system of government that works better for the citizens of New Jersey.

Our current system of redistricting and apportionment is embedded in the New Jersey Constitution and is effectively controlled by two parties – the Democrats and Republicans – despite the fact that over a third of New Jersey voters are registered as Unaffiliated.

It is a fallacy to think a split of seats between the Democrats and Republicans is the panacea for the redistricting and apportionment process. After all, it is entirely conceivable that what may be agreed upon by the 2 major parties may not be in the interest of the general public. For example, the 2 parties could together decide to create safe districts for each party and disenfranchise many voters favoring competitive elections. By comparison, some states prohibit the use of political data to favor or disfavor political parties as part of redistricting criteria while other states require that district lines be drawn to encourage competitiveness.

Moreover, there is no way to change this redistricting and apportionment process other than by an amendment to our state constitution which must be proposed by the legislative branch of New Jersey. In short, the Democrats and Republicans control the redistricting and apportionment process, and at the same time, are also the gatekeepers to any proposed change to the system. That does not seem fair to the people of New Jersey. It is no wonder why this current system is in place and will likely never change!

For the above-referenced reasons, we need a limited citizen initiative process in New Jersey. Citizens should be empowered through a limited form of direct democracy to propose government reform initiatives directly to the voters of New Jersey. After all, it is perfectly appropriate and logical for the people to write the rules of the game in the areas of government reform, and bypass a potentially conflicted legislative branch. We have many good state representatives doing good work – but that does not take away from the fact that these same representatives may have a potential conflict of interest when it comes to a government reform measure that may threaten re-election.

Besides redistricting reform, the limited citizen initiative process may be used for other government reform efforts that may be supported by the general public, but not the politicians in control of the system.

That being said, I am a realist and we must deal with the process we currently have in place. The following recommendations will help make this system fairer for the general public and increase transparency:

1. The commission should publicly release preliminary maps in advance of certification and hold public hearings afterward so that the proposed map is subject to scrutiny before a final vote.
2. The commission should solicit the input of a broad sampling of non-partisan experts and researchers to help scientifically identify problematic districting before any maps go into effect. A North Carolina state court used such information, in part, to strike down that state's map. Many experts that have served as expert witnesses in redistricting cases across the country should instead be consulted early in the redistricting process to help identify problems before new maps are approved. Please see Gupta, S. (September 7, 2020) ,“How next-gen computer generated maps detect partisan gerrymandering (Researchers are ready to expose hidden biases when redistricting begins in 2021)”, *ScienceNews*, <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/gerrymandering-elections-next-gen-computer-generated-maps>

3. The commission should publish a written report justifying all map making decisions in response to public and expert/researcher input and scrutiny.

Please note that numbers 1 and 3 are recommendations that were made in previous testimony by Fair Districts NJ. I also support other recommendations by Fair Districts NJ including making public all materials and communications related to the process as well as making recordings and transcripts of each meeting available in a timely manner. I simply propose the addition of scientific scrutiny by the expert/ research community. Scientific scrutiny provides additional objective criteria in drawing and evaluating maps besides other objective redistricting criteria that may not be required, but is good practice such as compactness and contiguity (required in NJ legislative redistricting).

I would like to remind the commissions that each has a special obligation to work in the interest of the general public considering voters cannot directly amend our current redistricting and apportionment system. The commission should always work towards full transparency and opportunity for meaningful public participation during the entire process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kenneth F. Cerullo, Esq.

Mahwah, NJ 07430

Good afternoon,

With my apologies for having missed today's hearing regarding potential redistricting of New Jersey's 11th Congressional District, I write to offer perspective why the 11th Congressional District is stronger and better representative of New Jersey and of the people in our area in its current configuration and should continue to include neighborhoods in West Orange, including my own neighborhood in the Gregory section of town.

I live in a neighborhood of commuters who will benefit immensely from the development of the Gateway Tunnell and who benefit immensely from consistent political districting lines. Changing the 11th to exclude West Orange residents would mean that those residents (like me) who were previously in Rep Pascrell's district in 2010, then moved into Rep Frelinghuysen's district in approximately 2012, would be moved into a new district this year. That's unfair to the residents who create relationships with their Congressional representatives (as my family has) and also to the Representatives who work very hard to learn the house-by-house and block-by-block characteristics and values of their districts.

For my daughter and her middle-school-aged friends, having Representative Sherrill come to our house, meet them, take interest in them, take pictures with them, and serve as an example of who they can be in their own community has an irreplaceable impact that as a parent I want to preserve. Having strong, successful, female role models that are as accessible in my own Congressional District as Representative Sherrill is and has been since 2016 is an immense benefit for my daughter, her friends, and for our entire community. Representative Sherrill's presence in my community is important and to be moved out of her district would be a huge loss for me and my neighbors.

Thank you for the work that you do. I hope that you understand the urgency with which I view this issue. Please keep us in the 11th!

Best wishes to all of you this holiday season.
Jonathan Redwine

West Orange, NJ