

APPENDIX

Chairman Wallace, Vice Chairs Fuller and Steinhardt, and Members of the Commission, thank you. My name is Mildred Scott and I am the Sherriff of Middlesex County. I want to welcome you to Middlesex County and the Middlesex ~~County~~ College today.

The process you are undertaking is one of the most important processes in our democratic form of government. Ensuring that districts are drawn to be representative of our communities in a place as diverse as New Jersey strikes at the very heart of who we are as a people. Done correctly, this process can empower communities to make their voices heard in Washington, protect the rights of minorities to select candidates of their choosing, and ensure trust in our democratic institutions of government. But if those ideals are not centered as you do your work, we can end up with districts that split communities of interest, disenfranchise communities and voters of color, and result in a minority of voters having control over our democratic institutions.

On top of that, you must respect principles enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, the Voting Rights Act, and sixty years of federal court jurisprudence enforcing the principle of one person, one vote. And then there is the New Jersey State Constitution that must be adhered to. But your work does not stop there. Because as wonderful as all of these documents are, if we take an honest look at the New Jersey Constitution, we must admit that although New Jersey was one of the first states to adopt a commission process with an independent voice for creating new districts after each decennial census—and thereby removing the creation of new districts from a partisan or bipartisan legislative function—our state Constitution is vague in terms of outlining principles about how you should evaluate proposals for new districts, and how to determine whether the districts you are creating are fair and equitable.

You will no doubt hear a lot about communities of interest, statewide partisan fairness, compactness, competitiveness, and preserving cores of prior districts. All are principles that I encourage you to consider during your deliberations because they advance the interests of the people, and yet, none of those words even appear in the state Constitution.

Balancing all of these principles to enact a map that truly represents New Jersey's diverse population and communities is incredibly difficult, and so on behalf of the residents of Middlesex County, I want to thank you for the incredibly difficult work you are undertaking.

I will get back to the principles I mentioned in a second, but another one that is important is the principle of transparency. The people of New Jersey need to know that this process—which may be the single most important process that happens every ten years in our political system—the people need to know that this process is undertaken in the open and with good faith by all involved. And to that end I want to thank you for the steps you have taken to increase transparency and public trust. The Constitution only mandates three public hearings, but you have agreed to ten. You have agreed to do many of them via online conference, ensuring that citizens need not even leave the comfort of their homes to have input on the process. And as we are witnessing today, you are committed to many hearings happening during nighttime or weekend hours, ensuring that these in-person meetings are open to a wider audience of people.

If there is one concept that I would like to lift up today in your deliberations, it is that the districts you create must be reflective of the broad diversity of our state. The Census recently completed shows that our state will soon be majority non-white. In fact, it is already nearly evenly split between white residents and non-white. Our Hispanic and Latino population has grown substantially since the last Census, climbing by more than 29% to comprise more than 2 million of our state's residents. And the Asian population increased 44% over the last decade, with more than 1 million people residing here of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage. Here in Middlesex County, we are proud to say that with more than 237,000 Asian residents, we have the largest Asian population of any county in New Jersey.

In Middlesex County, we wear our diversity on our sleeves with pride and we believe the diversity of our communities coming together creates strength. We are home to the first known black voter in New Jersey. And we have worked to create a more inclusive government where each of our diverse communities has a chance to lead and be represented in government. We are proud to be represented by the first black woman in the U.S. House of Representatives. At the county level, all countywide constitutional officers are women, and for the first time, a majority of countywide officers in Middlesex County will be people of color.

In the state legislature, we have elected the first Latina to represent Middlesex County in the State Legislature in Trenton. We have also elected the first Asian American from Middlesex County to his first full term in Trenton. And the residents of South Brunswick will proudly be represented by the first Asian American woman and the first Muslim woman in the State Legislature when the next session begins in January.

All of this has been possible not just because we have made deliberate choices to ensure our representation looks like the population we serve, but because districts have been created to broadly reflect the vast and proud diversity of our communities. And so yes, we urge you to ensure the Tenth District retains an African American majority. And we urge you to ensure the Eighth District retains a Hispanic majority.

But when considering other districts, we encourage you to take the approach that has led to increased representation for people of color in Middlesex County: and that is to create districts that reflect the broad diversity of our communities. It has not been necessary to pack people of color into a small number of districts to ensure they are represented. However, it has been important that we have a large number of districts that broadly represent the diversity of our entire state.

In closing, this is the thought I will leave you with: Our diversity in New Jersey has long been one of our most significant strengths. In a state that is becoming more diverse and increasingly becoming a home to a broad number of immigrants from around the world, I encourage you to create districts that are reflective of that broad diversity. As we have seen in Middlesex County, you do not need to pack people of color into as few districts as possible in order for them to be able to select candidates of their choosing. What is more important, and what creates more opportunities for our diverse populations to be represented, are districts that broadly represent the diversity of our state and its communities.

Thank you for your time this morning, and again, thank you for your efforts in the extremely important process you are undertaking. I look forward to engaging this commission and all of the communities we represent in Middlesex County as we move forward.

**TESTIMONY BY
LATINO ACTION NETWORK
New Jersey Redistricting Commission
November 13, 2021**

DELIVERED BY:

**Christian Estevez, President
Latino Action Network**

My name is Christian Estevez and I am the president of the Latino Action Network.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address you this morning and thank you for taking the time to listen to the residents of our state as you consider the lines of the next Congressional map that will have such a big impact on the representation New Jersey will have in our nation's capital.

It is with that in mind that I address you today. The lines you draw as a Commission will help determine whether the members we elect to the United States House of Representatives is truly reflective of the great diversity of our state.

Following the 2020 Census count, Latinos comprise 20.9% of New Jersey's total population. However, Latinos remain underrepresented in New Jersey's Congressional delegation, comprising only 8% of Congressional Representatives from our state. New Jersey also continues to lag behind in Latino representation in the State Legislature and in top political appointments. Latinos are also woefully underrepresented in the State Legislature, making up only 7 percent of the State Senate and only 8 percent of the General Assembly.

Lack of representation has huge consequences for underserved communities. As a growing segment of the state's population, Latinos continue to have little voice in decisions made in Trenton and in Washington, D.C. Latinos are left out of many important conversations and having little power to influence decisions that are made due to a lack of representation.

As a result, Latinos tend to suffer from a disproportionate amount of negative impacts in areas of housing, health, education and employment. Latinos continue to lack access to affordable housing, our children remain trapped in segregated school districts, and we continue to lack access to basic civil rights such as language and translation in courts and healthcare.

The current pandemic has laid bare the inequities our community has faced for decades. For example, while Latinos make up 20.9 percent of the state's population, Latino men represented 43% of coronavirus deaths in people under 50. Latino children were also overrepresented amongst students who lacked computers and internet access when schools shut down due to the pandemic.

However, there is now an opportunity for NJ to put forward a fair and accurate redistricting effort that reflects the power of the Latino vote. This is especially important for a new generation of Latino voters with Latino youth comprising 21.8% of NJ's school-age children.

The redistricting process provides an opportunity to create a fairer New Jersey, one in which Latinos have appropriate representation at the state and federal levels. We aim to advocate for appropriate congressional and state legislative districts where Latinos have more opportunities to elect candidates of their choice. These districts must respect our communities of interest and ensure that our communities are neither "packed" nor "cracked," so that our influence is not diluted.

We cannot afford to have too many Latinos "packed" into a few districts so that our community lacks influence in all the others. Conversely, we cannot afford to have our community "cracked", or underrepresented, in all districts so that we don't have influence in any district. You as commissioners have an opportunity to consider the size and distribution of New Jersey's Latino population and can right size the number of Latinos in each district so as to maximize our communities opportunities to elect candidates of our choice.

There are opportunities to create greater Latino representation both in the Northern and Southern portions of New Jersey. In the last 10 years, our communities have continued to grow across the state and that needs to be represented in the future map.

The Latino Action Network is working with a coalition of organizations that represent New Jersey's communities of color to draw a map that present the best opportunities for representation for our communities while also meeting the other requirements that this Commission must consider. We will be sharing these maps with you in the coming weeks. We look forward to exchanging ideas with all the members of this Commission on how we can draw a map that truly represent the diversity of our state.



Sonya Redd

Somerset, NJ 08873

REDISTRICTING TESTIMONY

Good morning, my name is Sonya Redd. I live and worship in what is called the greater New Brunswick area. Living off of Route 27 in Franklin Twp, referred to often as the New Brunswick/Princeton Corridor. I've lived in this area for 42 years, including Kendall Park, North Brunswick and 25 years Franklin Twp. I am here to testify about the important features of my community.

My community is quite diverse, a real blend of Black, Brown and white peoples. A perfect blend of what our nation will look like. My place of worship is one of the largest Baptist Churches in the area. Most of the members are from Somerset, Middlesex and Mercer Counties. Most of the old families of the church are uniquely connected to the other black churches in the Greater New Brunswick Area.

Our community is bordered by Route 287, Route 22, Route 1 and Route 27 runs through the middle along with the Raritan River. It encompasses Rutgers University, Princeton University, Rider University, Middlesex County and Raritan County Colleges, Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, New Brunswick, Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, Somerville, St. Peters Hospital, Princeton Medical & Princeton Hospital.

My community includes Franklin High School from which 2 of my grandchildren have graduated and one is currently attending, South Brunswick HS from where my son graduated, New Brunswick H. S. where my daughter-in-law graduated and currently teaches, North Brunswick from where my nephew graduated and Rutgers University from where my son and daughter-in-law both graduated. My community includes Hillsborough and Princeton where some of my doctor and grandchildren's doctors are located. My community includes Cranbury, NJ where I spent the last 20 years of my corporate career working. We, of course enjoy the theaters and fine restaurants in New Brunswick.

My community includes portions of every county in the 12th Congressional District and is in the 17th Legislative District.

I am very pleased with both the Congressional and Legislative Districts that make up my community. We have made great strides with interracial relations, interfaith relations, police relationships with the community have improved greatly. We are grateful to our now not so new Somerset County Prosecutor. Also, even though on paper it would appear that Franklin Twp and New Brunswick are separate towns, the people on both sides come together to help each other. When I leave here today, I am going to a prayer vigil in New Brunswick even though I live in Franklin Twp. This is not new, churches from both towns are connected, the people are connected. We have in the past prayed together for our community and will continue.

Please do not make any changes to our districts.

Thank you for extending me this opportunity to testify.

Rev. Sonya Redd

6X

Written Testimony of Devon Jiang
New Jersey Redistricting Commission
Hearing on the Establishment of New Congressional Districts in New Jersey
Saturday, November 13, 2021
10:00 A.M.

I would like to thank the chair for allowing a high schooler from West Windsor to testify.

44% describes the Asian American growth in New Jersey over the past ten years. In 2010, there were 725,726 New Jerseyans who identified as Asian. Today, more than 1.05 million New Jerseyans are Asian. The growth of this coalition is undeniable, especially right here in the Asian paradise known as Edison. In 2019, the Asian population percentage of this municipality was 48.7%, up from 43.19% in 2010 and 29.27% in 2000. This exponential increase is seen throughout the entire Northeast Corridor. Somerset County had nearly a 60% increase between 2010 and 2019, resulting in more than 62,000 of the 328,000 individuals identifying as Asian American. In Mercer County, the Asian population rose from 32,752 to 52,733. In 2018, this state saw the election of the first Asian American Congressman in its delegation. This redistricting commission, though, ought to cement these gains by, at the very least, adding an Asian-influence district.

There is no better example of why Asian Americans should have an influence district than the rise of Hispanic Americans between 2000 and 2010. Based on the 2020 Census, 18.8% of New Jerseyans were Asian. In the 2010 Census, Hispanics and Latinos comprised 15.2% of New Jersey's population. That commission's iteration produced a map that gave a majority-Hispanic/Latino district in Hudson County. The same story seen one decade ago exists, in the same way, today, but with Asian Americans. For decades, Asians have been ignored in politics and left to the dust. As a result, while 5.9% of Americans are Asian, only 16 out of the 435 districts, or 3.7% of the US House, are represented by Asians. This commission can do better by securing an Asian-influence district.

Now, why should New Jersey suddenly care about us? We are less engaged in politics than most other races and supposedly a less critical group. Frankly, it is surprising that I am here today. It is surprising that the son of immigrants from China is engaging in American politics of all places. It is a stereotype that Asian Americans are a model minority, that we work hard to make Goldman Sachs money. The truth is, though, like every American, we have our day-to-day

problems. The truth is, most Asians in America are not making six figures. And yet, this assumption that we do not need any help blocks us from participating in politics. The lack of Asians in New Jersey politics is a reflection of outdated maps that ignore our voice. However, that does not mean that we don't want to influence the New Jersey Congressional delegation. Andy Kim's presence rejects that assumption. His presence energized Asian Americans to vote in New Jersey's third Congressional district. In 2021, Asian Americans actively campaigned for Sadaf Jaffer in the 16th Legislative District. Heck, Cory Booker, who is not Asian, received nearly \$400,000 of campaign contributions from Asian Democrats in the 2020 Presidential primary. Congressman Kim and incoming Assemblywoman Jaffer are inspirations to many New Jerseyans Asians. In particular, Mr. Kim was part of why I believed that a son of Asian immigrants could belong into the sphere of American politics. Many of the members of this commission, especially minorities, recognize how effective representation is to their faith in government. Many of you know the feeling of representation because someone who looks like you knows your issues.

Representation increases participation by everyone, not just those who have power and privilege. A New Jersey where adults from every racial background vote in tandem is a better democratic system. A New Jersey that ushers in the growth of Asian Americans is not only welcomed but necessary. It is only fair for this commission to implement a map that considers New Jersey's diversity and recognizes Asian Americans. A district that extends from Burlington to West Windsor to Edison is advantageous for everyone. Asian Americans in New Jersey would finally have a dependable voice, turnout in every election would increase, and neither party would have to sacrifice their districts. I get that operatives want this commission to shore up districts, and Camden Democrats don't like New Jersey's 1st Congressional District to be jeopardized. An Asian-influence district, though, does not cause the Democrats to lose the first district, it does not reject Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman's constituents, and it does not make Congressman Malinowski's seat any more or less competitive. That said, by neglecting to add an Asian-influence district, this commission threatens the hopes of rising second-generation Asian Americans who are interested in advocating for a better New Jersey. This commission would fail its goal of establishing districts that accurately represent this garden of diversity. Therefore, on behalf of Asian-American New Jerseyans and the municipality of West Windsor, I implore this committee to serve justice to the Asian American community by adding an Asian-influence district.

Thank you Judge Wallace and members of the NJ Congressional Redistricting Commission for holding this public hearing on this very important matter and allowing me to be a small part of it.

My name is Linda Koskoski and I am the Council President in the Borough of Metuchen.

The important work before you is to make sure that a congressional district map represents the people of New Jersey in the fairest way possible. I'm speaking here today because of my strong belief that representation matters and that the will of the people must not be ignored.

I felt so strongly about this, that when the time came, I volunteered to chair the Metuchen Census Committee. I saw firsthand the hard work that went into making sure as many people as possible were counted so their voices could be heard. As we all know, that work was made even more challenging because it took place during uncertain times as the deadly pandemic began to unfold. However, those of us tasked with performing this sacred constitutional duty, worked tirelessly to make sure everyone was counted because we believed it was our duty to make sure that New Jersey received its fair share of representation.

In my view it would be unjust to undo the hard work put into the census just to draw a map that favors one political party over the other. The map should pass a non-partisan gerrymandering test. That is to say, a fair map should take into consideration factors such as communities of interest, compactness, connectiveness, and last but not least, continuity of representation which I will address more fully in a moment. Undoing the will of the voters by drawing a map that favors one party over the other would disenfranchise the voters and simply be unfair.

As a local elected official, I also want speak about how vitally important continuity of representation is to our residents, especially as it pertains to the federal government. I see firsthand how consequential it is to have representatives that know and understand the unique needs of the

communities they represent. For instance, I'm currently involved in the implementation of a federally funded road safety initiative which I have been working on for 2 years and it will take another 2 years to see shovels in the ground. Because federally funded projects and programs like this can take years to complete, I believe that having our member of Congress involved throughout the process allows our community to realize the maximum benefit from the funding. And because our Congress member knows our community so well, our challenges as well as our dreams and aspirations, he makes sure that we know of any federal programs, grants or funding that might help as we move our community forward. It is through the continuity of representation that this kind of strong working relationship can be developed and how members of congress can advocate so effectively on behalf of their constituents.

In closing, I ask that you take these key points under consideration as you complete your important work. I hope that you believe as I do, that choosing our representatives should be up to the voters and not a result of political partisan gerrymandering.

Thank you again for allowing me to participate and for taking my comments into consideration.

November 10, 2021

Members of the Redistricting Commission:

First, I'd like to thank you for your service on this important commission.

My name is Judi Knott and I am from Summit, New Jersey. I grew up on Long Island in a small town called St. James. I have had a long interest in democracy, having been a political science major at SUNY Albany. I was raised Roman Catholic and I am godmother to three amazing nieces. I am a volunteer with SHIELD, a service which shopped for seniors during the height of the COVID epidemic, and I continue to shop for a couple who live in Senior Housing in Summit. I am a member of Summit Marches On and Summit Area Indivisible where I have volunteered my time combatting voter disengagement and voter suppression through postcard efforts, phone banking, and canvassing. I am also a marketing professional with over 30 years of marketing experience, primarily in the publishing industry.

In the 22 plus years that we have lived in Summit, NJ, we have seen a growing shift in the diversity of our community. We have seen Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/South Asian, and LGBTQ persons move to Summit. We are a mix of many different cultures and faiths. These growing numbers of individuals and families represent a shift in demographics that cannot and should not be denied. To ignore these constituents would be doing a disservice to our community and would marginalize a growing number of citizens who need representation.

Our district is already competitive. We are advocating for keeping our district intact and allowing us to compete fairly.

I am asking that you take into consideration our shared values before making any redistricting decisions, and before redrawing this district.

Judi Knott

Summit, NJ