

January 3, 2022

**From the Chair of the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission David Imamura, and Commissioners Eugene Benger, Dr. Ivelisse Cuevas-Molina, Dr. John Flateau and Elaine Frazier.**

Today, the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission has submitted two sets of plans to the State Legislature. While we have always hoped that the entire Commission would be able to agree to a single set of plans, our constitutional mandate is to draw maps that best provide fair representation for the people of New York. We were determined to send to the legislature maps that achieve this, even if our colleagues were not.

We are confident that the lines this group voted to approve today reflect New York's vast diversity and appropriately maintain its communities of interest. Between July and December, the Commission conducted 24 public hearings over 51 hours, both in person and online. We listened to testimony from over 630 speakers, and received over 2,100 written submissions, testimonies, and maps. After the final public hearing, we deliberated for dozens of hours to synthesize these comments and create new maps accounting for the public's input.

We have gone to great lengths to work together as a Commission, and the maps we voted to approve reflect that work. We embarked on a series of 16 bipartisan working groups with our fellow Commissioners to identify areas of agreement and consider possible compromises. We made enormous progress in finding common ground among the Commission, but there remained significant differences on important points. Namely, we saw our colleagues' indifference to public input at every step of the process, and especially in our final round of bipartisan negotiations. In our instances of disagreement, we relied on public input to guide our decision-making, while it is clear our colleagues did not.

Our colleagues have called the maps we voted to approve partisan. However, we have pored over the hours of testimony and thousands of pages of submissions in an effort to draw districts that reflect the realities of New York's communities. To draw maps that disregard this public input is not only a grave injustice to the community members who took the time to share with us the realities of their neighborhoods but is in fact the real partisan gerrymandering. The lines our group has voted to approve today prioritize communities, not political parties, or politicians.

Consensus among the Commission was an ideal to strive for, but our utmost priority has been and always will be producing equitable maps that appropriately represent the people of New York State. This includes creating maps that rightfully account for public input and the many communities of interest we have seen and heard throughout our State. We did our best to draw and vote on fair maps because New Yorkers deserve no less.

You may view the Commission's plans by clicking [plans](#) on our website.