



Testimony to the Redistricting Advisory Commission
at its public hearing on September 8, 2022
by Regina Goutevenier, President of the
League of Women Voters of Port Washington-Manhasset
on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Nassau County

My name is Regina Goutevenier. As President of the League of Women Voters of Port Washington-Manhasset, I'm appearing on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Nassau County. I have lived in Port Washington for about 50 years. The League is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to encouraging everyone to participate fully in our democracy. We do not support or oppose any political party or candidate. After careful study and consensus, we may advocate on governmental issues in the public interest — as I do tonight. The League is here to advocate on behalf of a fair and transparent redistricting process.

“Fair and transparent” means providing the public

- Basic information regarding the Commission’s consultants and mappers and an advance schedule of meetings and proposed deadlines.
- The opportunity to attend all working sessions of this Commission, with sufficient notice of time and place.
- The opportunity for meaningful input, meaning having their concerns and suggestions formally addressed.

Under the proposed Commission process, noted by Commissioner Mejias at the August 31st hearing, and I quote:

“the maps ... proposed by both delegations are to be made public by 5pm on November 10th and then sent to the legislature 3.5 hours later. The hearing on those maps is the very same day. So the public has 1 hour between 5 and 6pm to review the maps that may rule its government for the next ten years.” End quote.

This proposed process is unacceptable. It allows only pro forma public comment, but not even pro forma map amendment by the Commission. . It is neither “fair nor transparent,” as it violates key elements of your charge from the Legislature, state and federal laws.

There is ample time for the Commission to release draft maps, provide time for public comment, **and** to consider map revisions that **address public concerns**. The Nassau County Charter requires this Commission to submit a proposed map to the Nassau County Legislature by January 7, 2023 — nearly 2 months after the Commission's unnecessarily accelerated submission deadline.

With respect to the congressional and state redistricting process, both the Independent Redistricting Commission and the Special Master in *Harkenrider v. Hochul* released draft maps, provided an opportunity for public comments after their release and then made revisions to **reflect public concerns**. There is absolutely no reason why Nassau County shouldn't plan the same process. The League strongly encourages the Commission to allow the public

- to evaluate the process used to design and propose legislative districts and
- to assess whether recommended districts reflect the interests and input of our communities.

Thank you