

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NASSAU COUNTY STATEMENT TO
THE NASSAU COUNTY TEMPORARY DISTRICTING ADVISORY COMMISSION**

THIS STATEMENT WAS PRESENTED IN PERSON TO THE COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 18, 2022

My name is Karen Moskowitz, Co-Chair of the Nassau League of Women Voters Redistricting Committee.

The League is a non-partisan, grassroots nonprofit encouraging informed and active participation in our democracy. The League takes positions on a variety of public policy issues, but never supports or opposes any political party or candidate.

As it has at *all* earlier public meetings of the Commission, we are here to advocate on behalf of a transparent and inclusive redistricting process. Once again we remind you that redistricting is foundational to the right to vote and that the public must be able to observe the work of the Commission. But to date what we have witnessed is an opaque procedure.

Firstly, with respect to the current process:

- Repeated requests for an inclusive process in statements to the Commission made by both the League and the public have fallen on deaf ears. There are few public meetings and working and mapping meetings - if there *are* any - are held outside the public view. An expanded calendar of public meetings could easily continue into December and still allow the Commission ample time to draw its proposed maps and meet the submission deadline to the Legislature.
- Despite claims that public meetings are broadly publicized, the public must work to find meeting details. On the official Commission website details of future meetings aren't posted in a timely manner or require layers of click-through to access. Full meeting information is, however, readily available on the Democratic delegation's shared drive. Dates and venues must be publicized with ample notice in the County Clerk's officially designated newspapers.
- Provisions still have not been made for those who are physically challenged, despite the fact that County Legislature and Commission meeting notices clearly state "The Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public meetings accessible to individuals with disabilities and every reasonable accommodation will be made so that they can participate." By holding no meetings virtually the physically challenged are unable to participate in real time with live oral statements or by responding to questions posed by Commissioners.

Secondly, the current plan is for the Commission to introduce proposed maps at 5:00 pm on November 10 and submit them to the Legislature 3½ half hours later.

- This effectively eliminates the public's ability to analyze and respond to the maps prior to their submission to the Legislature.
- It also means the Commission has no intention of holding public hearings to enable the community to express whether the maps meet their expectations.
- The State Independent Redistricting Commission held a second round of public hearings after the release of its proposed maps. And the Court hearing the *Harkenrider vs. Hochul* litigation allowed a window of public comment on the Congressional and N.Y. Senate maps proposed by its Court-appointed Special Master.
- The County Charter gives the Commission until Jan 7, 2023 to submit their mapping plan. The accelerated November 10 timing demonstrates gross disrespect for the public and is an obvious attempt to bypass community input.

The County's redistricting process has been opaque, and the lack of responsiveness from the Commission on concerns raised shows little regard for the interests of its residents. The League has suggested remedies so that communities of interest can be fairly served by the Commission's mapping plan. Let's make the efforts necessary for a fair redistricting process. Thank you.